

WILLIAM MAXSON HOUSE
(John Brown House)
(Near) Springdale, Iowa (2 miles from)
Cedar Co

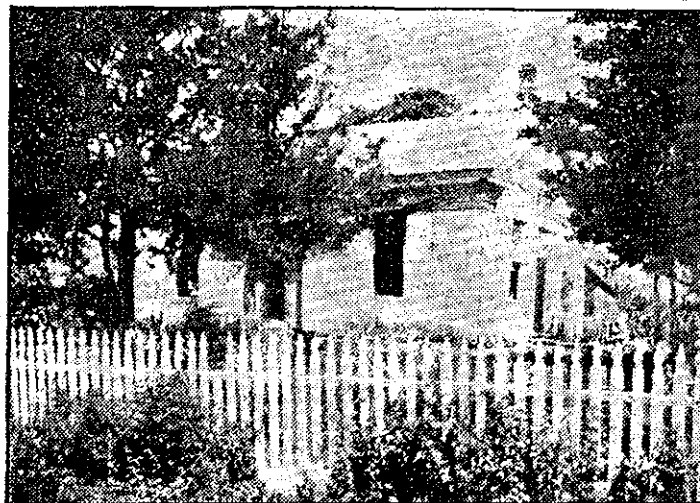
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. 30

Historic American Buildings Survey
J.A. Dougher, District Officer
310 Old Colony Building
Des Moines, Iowa



The Old Maxson Home, John Brown's Residence at West Branch.

A Story of the Maxson Family From Ohio.

To the Open Forum Editor:

I read in The Register of some of the historical events of pioneer days. I was especially interested in the story on John Brown.

My father, Thaddeus W. Maxson, the last survivor of the immediate William Maxson family, passed away at his home in Pasadena, Cal., Feb. 6, in his ninety-seventh year.

He was a friend and supporter of John Brown and was associated with him and his men during the time they spent in his father's home in the winter of 1857 and '58, near Springdale.

Down the Ohio River.

The Maxsons were one of the first families to settle in Iowa. They left Ohio with their possessions on a flatboat and floated down the Ohio river to its junction with the Mississippi and to the boat landing near Muscatine. This was in 1839. Near this landing William

Maxson, his wife and three sons squatted on a half section of land. Indians were many but friendly. The howling wolves struck terror to the hearts of the children.

In the fall of 1857 came John Brown and 11 of his faithful followers to the farm. They knew the Maxsons as supporters of the abolition of slavery and were taken in and fed and sheltered. My father was then near 20 years of age.

Three years after the death of John Brown came the Civil war and my father enlisted in 1861 in the Tenth Kansas infantry as a private. He was promoted to regimental commissary, which position he held until his honorable discharge in October, 1864.

Moved to California.

He returned to Iowa and was married to Miss Lydia H. Yates of Ashtabula, Ohio. To this union were born five children, all living. My mother died in 1902. Later my father married again and had spent the last 25 years in Pasadena.

Our home is only a short distance from the old John Brown home.—Mrs. Candace Maxson Negus, West Liberty.